

# What Everyone Should Know About U.S.-China Relations

by Jack Anderson

WASHINGTON, D.C.

**I**t could have been a moment that changed the course of history.

It happened in 1954. John Foster Dulles, architect of America's cold war policy, faced Chou En-lai, the Chinese Foreign Minister. They were in the conference room in Geneva, where the major powers were carving Indochina into spheres of influence to bring temporary peace to the area.

Chou walked toward Dulles, and held out his hand. Dulles hesitated, then clasped his hands behind his back. The Secretary of State muttered, "I cannot," and stalked out of the room.

The incident still burns inside Chou as the most humiliating of the scores of rebuffs the United States has handed Communist China in the past 25 years.

Still-secret files, stored in guarded government warehouses in Washington, tell how the U.S. has fumbled a number of opportunities to achieve the very détente with Red China that President Nixon is traveling to Peking to seek.

The China papers are heavy with the names of America's recent great—Truman and Eisenhower, Kennedy and Nixon. They tell how Chiang Kai-shek's

lavishly financed "China Lobby" pressured the U.S. into decisions that have cost us billions of dollars, two bitter wars, and immeasurable prestige.

We have made an exhaustive investigation of a number of the China papers. We have conducted extensive interviews with men who were close to the events to learn what the remaining documents contain.

Here are the highlights of the story U.S. officials have tried to hide:

- On several occasions during the 1940's, the Chinese Communists hinted at their independence from Moscow and sought U.S. friendship. They were rudely rejected.

- The U.S. made a firm decision to back Chiang and "contain" Mao before Red China intervened to hold North Korea. Yet the Communists continued to attempt to establish friendly ties.

- Secretary of State Dean Rusk proved an inflexible block to the reappraisal of our China policy during the Kennedy years.

- The Vietnam war, like the one in Korea, probably could have been avoided if we had opened relations with Red China.

- Richard Nixon, who built his political career as a staunch anti-Communist and friend of old Chiang, came into office with the goal of normalizing relations with the Chinese mainland. He angled for his Peking invitation despite the opposition of close advisers.

## Who 'lost' China?

The details of American China policy from the 1940's to the 1970's is told in a collection of diplomatic papers, relatively few of which have been made public. These documents have been the heart of the controversy over who "lost" China. Some were the basis of the 1949

Truman Administration "White Paper" which showed that China was lost by Chiang's corruption, mismanagement and ineptitude.

The China Lobby—a collection of China traders, public figures and hirelings—charged that the "White Paper" was a "whitewash." When the Republican Party took control of the government in 1953, the pro-China bloc in Congress ordered the State Department to publish the entire record of Sino-U.S. relations from 1942 to 1949.

Two volumes were published. They showed, beyond dispute, that the burden of responsibility for China's "loss" weighed directly upon Chiang. Further, the documents revealed U.S. diplomats in China had warned repeatedly that Chiang was uncooperative in the war against Japan, that his regime was thoroughly corrupt, and that he would not be able to defeat the Communists in a civil war. These warnings were consistently ignored by U.S. policy makers.

## Chiang powerful

During the past three decades, Chiang Kai-shek has exerted an inordinate influence over the foreign policy of the United States. When the China papers proved an embarrassment to him, he urged publication be stopped.

Two more volumes were released in 1967 and 1969, but these still don't cover Chiang's downfall. The record of events beyond 1945 remains secret.

The papers show that until 1944, America's China policy was ambiguous. The U.S. was far more interested in defeating the Japanese, who then controlled China, than in the power struggle between Chiang's Kuomintang and Mao's Communists.

It was felt that the best way to overthrow the Japanese was to continue



Mao Tse-tung (l) and Maj. Gen. Patrick J. Hurley met in 1945 over China strife.